

54-44-1040-41

NR 9-30-76

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED  
DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

PH 0106

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC RICHARD. L. KITCHENS POST, #41

AND/OR COMMON HELENA LEGION HUT

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
409 PORTER STREET  
CITY, TOWN HELENA  
STATE ARKANSAS  
VICINITY OF  
CODE 05  
COUNTY PHILLIPS  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT FIRST  
NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CODE 107

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME RICHARD L. KITCHENS POST, #41 (D. T. HARGRAVES, JR., FINANCE OFFICER)

STREET & NUMBER  
409 PORTER STREET

CITY, TOWN HELENA STATE ARKANSAS  
VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE

STREET & NUMBER PHILLIPS COUNTY COURTHOUSE

CITY, TOWN HELENA STATE ARKANSAS

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
DATE  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
CITY, TOWN STATE  
•  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

# DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

According to contemporary newspaper accounts the American Legion Hut in Helena, Arkansas was designed by Legionnaire H. H. Walters. Present Officers of the post report that Helena contractor E. T. Walker supervised construction of the Legion building, with much of the work done by local members. Most of the building materials were donated, including the cypress logs from the farm of Robert Gordon.

Designed in a rustic style, the Helena Legion Hut is constructed of cypress logs notched and joined at the corners. Cement chinking and steel pins inserted vertically through the logs at three-foot intervals reinforce the log walls. A gable roof covers the one-storey rectangular structure.

The facade of the building features a simple porch. Rough-hewn paired posts set in four square-cut stone bases support the hipped roof with exposed rafters. Above the porch roof the gable end of the building is covered with rectangular shingles. A bay-like projection on the west elevation has a gable roof. This west gable end features vertical flush-board trim terminating in a zig-zag pattern.

The original building was planned to hold a 60-foot by 44-foot meeting room, men's and ladies' dressing rooms, and office space. In 1949 a two-storey frame addition was made to the rear of the hut, and the gable roof was extended to cover this addition. At the same time two small one-storey shed roof additions were made on the east elevation. Though not of log construction, these later additions are nevertheless in keeping with the architectural style of the hut.

The rustic style is continued in the interior of the Legion Hut. Double entry doors open into the large meeting room. The ceiling extends to the ridge line of the roof, thus exposing the structural details of the building. At the south end of the room is a large fireplace of cut stone matching that used on the porch. Weapons used in World War I and World War II are displayed along the walls of the meeting room.

The Legion Hut rests on its original site near downtown Helena. Except for the 1949 additions the building has changed little since its 1922 construction. The Helena Legion Hut remains in excellent condition.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES JULY 4, 1922

BUILDER/ARCHITECT H. H. WALTERS, E. T. WALKER

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Constructed in 1922, the Richard L. Kitchens Post in Helena is one of the oldest American Legion buildings in Arkansas. According to present officers of the Post, the Helena building was the first in the country to be called a "hut".

The Richard L. Kitchens Post is named for a Helena doughboy who was a private in the 312th Field Signal Battalion of the 87th Division. While enroute to France on a troop ship, Kitchens developed influenza, a condition which afflicted thousands of soldiers in Western Europe during World War I. Kitchens died on September 18, 1918, and was buried in the American Cemetery in Pons, France.

A temporary charter for the Richard L. Kitchens Post was issued on August 11, 1919, with the permanent charter issued the following year. Fifteen charter members organized the post, which has been continually active since 1919. Like other American Legion Posts around the country, the Richard L. Kitchens Post has played an active role in civic and social events in the local community.

Contemporary newspaper articles in The Arkansas Legionnaire, a weekly publication of the Arkansas American Legion office, describe construction of the Helena Legion Hut. On April 24, 1922, it was reported that a lot near downtown Helena had been purchased as a building site for the Post. Though all building materials were donated and work was to be done by Legionnaires, there was nevertheless a \$3,000.00 fund to be used in construction of the building.

The Helena Hut was designed in a rustic style by Helena Legionnaire H. H. Walters. Another Legionnaire, E. T. Walker, supervised construction of the building. The cypress logs used in the walls were cut from the farm of a third Helena Legion member, Robert Gordon.

On July 4, 1922, a public ceremony was held to lay the cornerstone of the Helena Legion Hut. Work commenced soon afterwards and the building was completed within the year. The rectangular building has a gable roof and features a hip roof porch across the facade. Cypress logs with cement chinking make up both the exterior and interior wall surfaces. Cut gray stone is used in the porch post bases, and in the large chimney at the south end of the meeting room. The log and stone construction materials add to the rustic style of the Hut.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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For over fifty years the American Legion Hut in Helena has served veterans of World War I, World War II, the Korean conflict and the war in Vietnam. Constructed by and for American Legion members, it stands as a monument to twentieth century American military veterans. Architecturally the Helena Legion Hut is unusual as a twentieth century institutional structure.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Arkansas American Legion Office (Little Rock, Arkansas). Information file  
 Richard L. Kitchens Post, #41 Helena, Arkansas  
The Arkansas Legionnaire, April 24, May 8, June 26, 1922.  
 Henry, Ray. The American Legion in Arkansas (1919-1955), Vol II. Unpublished  
 manuscript, Arkansas American Legion Office, Little Rock, Arkansas.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 5	7 2 1 4 0 0	3 8 2 3 1 2 5	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE

DIANNA KIRK, HISTORIAN

ORGANIZATION

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

DATE

SEPTEMBER 9, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

300 WEST MARKHAM

TELEPHONE

(501) 371-1639

CITY OR TOWN

LITTLE ROCK

STATE

ARKANSAS

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

GENE RICHARDSON

TITLE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

DATE SEPTEMBER 9, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

